
ARENA REPORT

Volume 1, Number 13

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION
Sunday, March 5, 1989
Springfield Civic Center
Springfield, MA

(16)

I'd like to welcome new readers as well as the regulars to issue 13 of "Arena Report". Besides the Springfield report and the usual stuff in this issue, I'll have a review of "Chi-Town Rumble". I'll also look at where the NWA has headed since the dethroning of "Big Dust". An update on our move to Orlando: It's looking more in favor of going. I'd say it's 80% now that we'll move. We are going down the weekend of March 17 to check everything out. (On my wife's company of course.) Dusty is running a show there on the 19th but I'm taking the first flight out that day. If we do move, the actual move won't be until July. The future of this sheet is not in doubt. As a matter of fact it may even be better as I'll have a better variety of organization with Vince running Tampa (hour and a half from Orlando) Turner running Daytona, (hour) and Dusty running Orlando every other week. Don't laugh. I'm actually looking forward to seeing something different.

Our next issue will come from the Hartford Civic Center March 19. (Sound familiar.) There is a big rumor now that the NWA is running April 10 in New Haven but as of yesterday 3/4, there is no confirmation from the coliseum.

"Arena Report" is published approximately twice a month and cost 50¢ an issue. There should appear a number at the top left corner of this page notifying you how many issues you have remaining on your subscription. All renewals, letters, and match results may be sent to Ron Lemieux, 205 Vernon Ave. #187, Vernon, CT 06066. Joining me tonight was Dan Reilly who will have to take over the reporter role for the triangle of cities (Hartford, New Haven, Springfield) if I go. I know you hate New Haven Dan but there are worse things in life. I could send _ _ _ _ _ the Turkey with you. On to the matches.

Opening Match

Koko Ware beat Nikolai Volkoff in 9:37 when Nic went for a slam but Koko hung on for a cradle. Volkoff needs to go back to Russia. Real bad. RL-Dud DR-D

2nd Match

Red Rooster beat The Brooklyn Brawler with an inside cradle at 9:50. First match between the two that I thought was good. Fans are starting to take to Taylor but I wish he'd stop that stupid rooster strut. RL *** DR-B

3rd Match

Curt Hennig went to a time limit draw with Hercules in 18:12. A weird time limit huh? Some fan yelled to Curt, "You couldn't do it in the NWA, why do you think you'll do it here?" Curt yelled back, "That's the AWA Dumbo." Herc had Hennig up for the backbreaker

when the bell rang. Herc saw my stop watch and I told him it was only 18 minutes and he wanted Dave Hebner to check my watch. Good thing it's a work as I had already reset it. Sorry Mr. Hernandez. RL ** $\frac{1}{2}$ DR- B

Return Tag Team Match

The Rockers beat The Brain Busters by disqualification in 12:16. Not as good as last month but the finish was great. Jannetty gave Arn a superkick outside the ring while Michaels did the same to Tully in the ring. Michaels then went to the top rope and stood on Marty's shoulders for the splash (a real good one) onto Blanchard. At the count of two, Arn pulled ref Morella out of the ring which led to the dq. Good match, great last 5 minutes. Tully looks like he either got in a barroom brawl or a shoot as he has a nice black eye and swollen face. RL *** $\frac{1}{2}$ DR-A-

WWF Women's Championship

Rockin Robin used a bulldog to defeat Sensational Sherri in 7:57. Mostly comedy and I've had enough of these two. RL $\frac{1}{2}$ * DR-F

6th Match

Paul Roma beat Mike Sharpe with a flying dropkick from the top rope in 8:59. Same as usual between Sharpe and one of the Scallions. Okay work but nothing special. RL * DR-D+

Main Event: Tag Team Match

Jake Roberts & Ultimate Warrior beat Andre the Giant & Rick Rude in 11:39. Warrior is Vince's #3 draw. No questions asked. The heat for this guy is always phenomenal. Bobby Heenan was here for this bout which surprised but pleased me. At one point, Rude's trunks came down and I don't think he knew it as they stayed that way for quite some time. Heenan was laughing his head off and covering his mouth to try to hide it. End saw Jake chase Andre to the dressing room and Ultimate press slammed Rude and pinned him. Kind of kills things for Wrestlemania in Springfield for those two. Good action (when Rick was in) and great heat. RL ** $\frac{1}{2}$ DR-C match and A for heat.

Springfield Notes

They drew 7,000 here today which is their second good crowd in a row for a not too good card on paper. Got that?... The WWF fans treat these guys like movie stars. After the bouts, we hung around outside and when Jake and Koko came out the fans were screaming and crowding them and their car until the cops cleared a path...W.S.P.R., a radio station in Springfield had a talk show with the Director of the civic center on, Mike Graney. Dan called and asked him about the locking out of other organizations etc. Graney seemed to have a grip on the wrestling scene and said he had been in contact with the NWA but the same issue always came up. Lack of television in the area. In reference to a lock out of other groups, he said it's illegal in Springfield but there is a 10 day clause which says you can't book two shows within 10 days of each other which is something we've heard before. He's very pleased with the WWF's crowds recently and he should be... They are booked here closed circuit for Wrestlemania.

Chi-Town Rumble Review

Michael Hayes opened the show defeating Russian Assassin Victory with the DDT. It was a bit too long but I enjoyed it as Hayes did a decent job warming up the crowd... Sting pinned Butch Reed in the only

match I truly hated. Reed hasn't gotten over his titanitus and I don't think thereis a cure for him... Midnight Express beat Randy Rose & Jack Victory who subbed for Condrey. Apparently Dennis wasn't happy about his future here so he left. Rose took the pin so he's gone (for now) The managers did a real good job in the ring which surprised me. The Midnights used the flapjack for the pin... Mike Rotunda regained the T.V. title from Rick Steiner when Steiner had the sleeper on Mike but when he fell back he didn't lift his shoulder up so he was counted down. This match was okay but not like their Starcade bout. I am getting tired of Steiner's act. He looked perfectly normal in the dressing room during Steamboats celebration... Lex Luger won the U.S. strap from Barry Windham in an excellant bout. This was like the third big match in a row where Lex has been real good. It was a nice surprise that this belt switchched as I didn't expect it and it makes it more fun... The Road Warriors retained their World Tag Belts by turning back Kevin Sullivan and Steve Williams. This match was good but I think Doc has regressed. I liked him better as a face... Rick Steamboat won the World Title from Ric Flair in what had to be for me, the best match I've ever witnessed. Definatly match of the year but I must first wait to see Bad News Brown vs. Jim Duggan at Wrestlemania V. Honestly though, this match was superb. After Flair did his flip over the buckles and then his run to the corner and body press which Ricky reversed, I thought it was over but they continued on for another 8 minutes. The dressing room celebration was good but I wish they had laid off the champagne a bit. Bob Caudle sounded like an idiot when he asked Steamboat if he was speechless. No, he just couldn't see. So where do we go from here... How about:

A Look At The NWA

I have to be honest folks. I almost wish Dusty Rhodes came back. Alot of people said the NWA would get worse before it got better after Dusty left. But did we expect what we have now. Where can I start. How about the t.v. shows. The syndies have been so bad. Everyones raving about the acquisition of Lance Russell but truthfully, putting a great announcer with a show comprised of six squash matches does not make a good T.V. show.

Let's now look at the recent hiring of new(?) talent. Dan Spivey, Vince Young, and the Iron Sheik. Good choices. Now I can see why George Scott didn't want Pillman or Pritchard to come in. He had better people in mind. People he heard of. I bet he thought the Samoan Swat Team would be comprised of Afa and Sika. When he found out they were Sama and Fatu he probably wanted to send them back to World Class.

Scott's new rules for house shows was evident not only at hte Philly show but the pay per view as well. There were tons of rest holds in the early matches and every time Reed threw Sting out of the ring, I expected him to go out after him but then I remembered the rule where there is to be no out of the ring brawling during the early bouts. Makes for pretty boring stuff.

Letting talent get away is becoming a hobby for the NWA. Whether bidding for someone (Piper) or just mistreating them to cause them to quit (Fantastics), they sure have a knack for it.

Recapping things, I don't think it was a good idea to put non wrestling people (Petrik and Herd, yeah I know Herd used to be in it but so was George Scott) in charge of the number 2 promotion in the country. Hopefully in time they'll get things on track but I hope they do it before it's too late. I am not a WWF die hard. I want the NWA to succeed more than anybody but I'll say it once more. They have to get their act together. If you disagree with this assesment, let me know. I'd like to hear your opinion on the NWA.

Ramblings

I can sum up the difference between Titan and Turner with this next diatribe. Vince has celebrities such as Run DMC, and Morton Downey Jr. lined up for Wrestlemania while Turner has Pete Fountain, Al Hirt, and New Orleans Saints quarterback, Bobby Hebert lined up for his April 2 pay per boo. The first two are jazz musicians. That's a good cross mix, jazz and wrestling. Hold on while I take my tongue out of my cheek... Another example of major league vs. minor league; Titan had a Wrestlemania Sweepstakes run in USA Today last week and Turner had one in The Ahsoskie News Herald. (Sorry Mike B., I couldn't resist.)... The AWA decided not to tape television in Pittsburgh on 3/3 as they only had a 600 advance a week and a half before the show. They still ran a show and it ended up drawing their best house in a while with 3,510. I'll have a full report next time but Bruno Sammartino made an appearance as he was announced before the Zybyzsko-Slaughter match. Bruno shook Sarge's hand but Larry refused it. Local Pittsburgh natives Terry Gibbs, Shane Douglas, and Johnny Valiant were on the show. As a matter of fact, Gibbs took the departed Tom Zenk's place and teamed with Ken Patera against Badd Company. Guess who won. The AWA is said to be coming back in early May... Surprised to see the Rock N Roll Express-British Bulldog match on ESPN this past weekend. Too bad they didn't show the whole bout. Also too bad they didn't drown out the jap announcers while Greggie and Ray-Ray were commentating... Tell me what the sense is in booking The Rockers against Akeem and Boss Man at Wrestlemania. A contrast in size or what. What I would do if they are serious about giving the Twin Loads the tag belts is have them squash the Rockers to make them killers, but that might not work either as they'd still have to explain why Hogan beat both of them up... Roddy Piper appeared on the "Gong Show" a couple of weeks back. Yes, he was in persona... Rumor has it that the NWA contacted Dusty about doing some combined shows when they come to Florida. It seems that they parted on decent terms. However, when the NWA called, Dusty was very belligerent and that took care of that... You want to hear some funny stuff? Call this number- (407) 273-1940. It's the number of the Eddie Graham Sports Complex in Orlando. They give you the rundown of that weeks card and after each match, the announcer says what a great bout it will be. "Commando Ray meets the Italian Stallion. Should be a great bout." Yeah right, in whose lifetime. After he announces the entire card, he explains that Dusty is doing his best to bring the Florida wrestling tradition back to where it once was. And Dusty also promises new talent each and every week. Wonder what the marks think about their main guy running the show... Speaking of FCW, oh, excuse me, PWF, Bobby Jaggers and Black Bart are in. They'll feud with the Nasty Boys. UUGH. Terry Funk will also make some appearances as well as teach Dustin how to wrestle. Hope he has a few years to kill... Vince has put a stop to PRISM taping Philly house shows. Looks like Z Channel in LA is in the same boat. By the end of the year it looks like Boston and MSG shows will not be taped anymore either... Super Black Ninja to be interviewed by George Scott this week... Jerry Jarrett gets nice guy of the week award. 3/4 was to be Lance Russell's last day. The Memphis media was on hand in force to cover Lance's farewell but Jarrett told Lancer he was done beforehand and then explained that Lance had to leave earlier to start his new job. .. I can see it now. Super Black Ninja will be announced as the new member of Hiro MatsuTa (as Gary Cappetta said it) corporation, Mitsubishi or something like that.

Correspondent Reports

War Memorial Arena

Johnstown, PA

February 14, 1989

Correspondent: John Lanigan

1) Sam Houston beat Barry Horowitz with a bulldog in 13:41. *C* 2) Akeem went to a double count out with John Studd at 7:44 in a real loser. *F* 3) Ron Bass over Koko Ware when the "Outlaw" used Miss Betsey's butt (of the whip) to hit Ware and set up the pin. *C-* 4) Brain Busters beat The Rockers in 16:26 when Arn tripped up Michaels enabling Tully to score the pin. During this match, a sixty year old guy slugged Tully outside the ring. After security got over their shock, they escorted the guy out. *A-* 5) Rick Rude pinned Tito Santana when Rude foiled a sunset flip by grabbing the ropes for the pin in 14:46. *C* 6) Ron Garvin beat Boris Zhukov in 12:32 in a usual "rugged" slapfest. *C-* 7) Jake Roberts beat Andre the Giant by dq in 12:41 with John Studd as guest ref. When Andre wouldn't stop choking Jake, Studd slugged the Giant and when Andre hit him back he was disqualified. Makes sense huh? *D-* Att: 3,515

Gleason's Gym

Brooklyn, NY

February 18, 1989

Correspondents: Gary Fishman & Evan Ginzburg

This was a t.v. taping using Johnny Rodz's students. Ratings are a composite of both Evan and Gary. 1) Oriental Kid beat Mr. Nice. Sounds like two midgets but they weren't. $\frac{1}{2}$ * 2) Little Wolf pinned The Rebel. Worked the crowd well. $\frac{1}{2}$ * 3) Black Gordman (yes, the one from the famed Goliath and Gordman team.) drew Larry Brisco. Brisco is said to be the best of Rodz's students. $\frac{1}{3}$ * 4) Mark Adams beat Shadow Warrior (not Randy Culley) $\frac{1}{2}$ * 5) Bialo the Giant (no relation to Andre) beat Mark Adams on count out. Dud. 6) Sweet William over Brian Drecher in a squash. Sweet is a Bubba look a like and Evan can't figure out why he's getting a push. Maybe he's another Steve Lombardi. $\frac{1}{4}$ * 7) Twin Tower beat Beast & Molotov Koloff (no relation to cocktail) $\frac{1}{4}$ * 8) Rhino Powers beat The Savage and Diesel Don. $\frac{1}{2}$ * 9) Johnny Rodz beat Mondo Kleen in a lumberjack bout. Lots of good brawling. Carmine Despirito of Wrestling Eye magazine was Mondo's manager. $\frac{3}{4}$ *

Madison Square Garden

New York, NY

February 20, 1989

Correspondent: Elyse Zois

1) Jim Powers rolled up Mike Sharpe. 2) Brooklyn Brawler pinned Red "Terry" Rooster when Bobby Heenan tripped Taylor when he had Bawler up for a slam. 3) John Studd and Akeem were counted out in 7:50. 4) Bushwhackers beat The Rougeau's in 12:17 when Butch pinned Jacques. Elyse says this was comic relief. Maybe the Bushes will debut on HBO soon. 5) Brutus Beefcake rolled up Rick Rude in 18:24. 6) Haku and Rick Martel went to a time limit draw in the best match of the night. These two always seem to work well together. 7) Greg Valentine pinned Jim Neidhart with the shin guard. 8) Randy Savage upended Ultimate Warrior via count out when Rude showed up and Warrior left the ring to confront him. Bout was non-title.

Memorial Hall

Kansas City, Kansas

February 24, 1989

Correspondent: Bruce Grummert

1) T.C. Carter beat Jim Lett into submission with a reverse backbreaker

in 8:43. 2) Bobby Jagers pinned Curtis Hughes in 11:43. 3) Ric McCord pinned Sheik Abdullah with a sunset flip off top rope in 14:58. 4) Mike George & Akio Sato beat Steve Ray & Porkchop Cash in 18:21 when Sato hit Cash with a groin shot. 5) Wahoo McDaniels beat Manny Fernandez in an Indian Strap Match with Pat O'Conner guest ref in 7:08. Wahoo bled bad but no blade job for Manny. Bruce says the worst card he's seen in Memorial Hall.

Providence Civic Center

Providence, RI

March 4, 1989

Correspondent: Louie Fortuna

1) King Haku beat Tito Santana in 12:34. Tito tried a sunset flip over the ropes but Haku hung onto the rope and sat on Chico for the pin. 2) Red Rooster beat Brooklyn Brawler with a backslide in 10:30. 3) Honkey Tonk Man went to a double count out with Bret Hart in 14:21. Jimmy Hart was with HTM. 4) Bushwhackers beat The Rougeaus when Butch small packaged Ray. Time was 12:33. 5) Herculady and Curt Hennig went to a 19:33 minute draw. 6) Koko Ware pinned Slick Nick Volkoff in 2:35. Why couldn't our match been that short. 7) Jake Roberts and Ultimate Warrior beat Andre the Giant and Rick Rude in 7:01 with the same finish as Springfield. Attendance was 6,700 which again is up from the norm. They return here 4/28 which I may attend as there seems to be nothing in the area for April. There was no plug during "Catch the Pinfalls" for NWA in New Haven this week so who knows.

Letters To The Editor

I Re-Enlist

After reading the "Phun in Philadelphia" edition of Arena Report (Vol. I, #II) I knew it was time to re-enlist for another subscription. The issue was special alright, but not only because of the fine reports on the Liz Bump/Hogan-Savage split or the NWA live show in Philly. The issue was unique because of your enthusiastic chronicle of the (mis) adventures of the gang of fans you joined in a weekend ramble ala wrestling. No shoot, your coverage of the side bar incidents reminded me of the first Beatles' movie, "A Hard Days Night", in which the Fabulous Four sort of, kind of, in a way, terrorized London! My vote for man of the year goes to Steve Sims who apparently packaged the trek.

I've got only two questions. (1) What is Lance Levine really like? I am afraid to ask exactly what he must have done when nobody was looking, to the statue of Rocky at the Spectrum, but I am curious about his mental and emotional stabability since his Chokehold newsletter is, like, from another planet. (2) Did Dave Meltzer jump up and down in front of the t.v. set when the 15 of you were watching the ESPN AWA show and block everyone's view with his "California Beach Bum Body Builder Behemoth-sized back? I accidently sat behind him near ringside during a recent live NWA show in Oakland, CA, and I needed a periscope to see the action between Flair and Sting in the ring. I do have one more question, though, and that is why Harvey Cobb was not part of the adventure? It seems the discussion he and Dave could have had during breakfast at Denny's or after the AWA show would have been more interesting than that lame disagreement between the older gent and the younger dude over who was going to pay for the meal.

Jeff Mullins

San Jose, CA

RL- Answer to question #1- I'll ask Lance's psychiatrist Jeff Zinger.

Yeah, right. How can you question Lance's stability when you use one of his favorite words in your last sentence. Answer to question #2- I couldn't tell if Dave was jumping up and down as I couldn't see over Mike Gunter's 6'6 frame. Answer to question #3- He wasn't invited. Just kidding.

Vince McMahon Exposes The Business

In the early 70's I was in my early teens and first started watching wrestling (mostly WWF). For a year or two I thought it was "real", soon learned the error of my ways, and have enjoyed it ever since in spite of realizing it's a work.

Now that Vince McMahon has exposed the business (it made all the N.Y. papers-it's language was such that even the most misguided mark could not misinterpret), it brought me back to my earlier days as a fan. If I had seen a picture in the paper with two wrestlers and the caption, "Phony Baloney, When big men clash in the wrestling ring they're not really trying to hurt each other" as I saw recently, I would have been devastated.

McMahon's ruined the WWF for the old time fans with his emphasis on freakish size, circus act gimmickry and the burying of once great stars in prelims. In his all encompassing greed he's left no stone unturned as now he's doing his best to discourage the marks. I really wonder what former WWF honchos Vince McMahon, Sr. and Willie Gilzenberg would have thought of all this.

Evan Ginzburg
Bayside, NY

A couple more notes before I close. I saw the FNN schedule for April and it lists CWA Wrestling on four of the five Sat. But I'll believe it when I see it... I've thoroughly enjoyed Randy Savage's interviews as of late. No doubt, tons better as a heel but he did the job for Vince as a face... Do you think Butch Miller reads the fanzines? During their debate with the Rougeaus, he called them the "Ragu Sisters". Didn't we hear that from someone in fanzine land?

Final Word

Hope everyone enjoyed this issue. Since I've been publishing now for a little over 6 months I'd like some feedback on how you think this sheet is. Am I too critical? What do you like and what don't you like. I can take criticism. My name isn't Ronnie Rhodes.

Thanks to John, Gary, Evan, Elyse, Bruce, Louie, and Jeff for their help in this issue. See you in two weeks from the Hartford Civic Center. Till then.

Bye,

Ron

Just as I was about to pack it in tonight I got the line-up for the NWA show on April 2. Here goes: Flair vs. Steamboat, Victory vs. Luger, Roadies vs. Sullivan & Spivey, Williams & Rotunda vs. Gilbert & Steiner, Midnight vs. Samoan Swat Team, Abdullah vs. Steve Casey, Iron Sheik vs. Junkyard Dog, Rip Morgan vs. Sting, and Reed vs. Murdoch I see three decent matches out of nine. Another waste of Sting. More comments on this next time out. See ya!